

Story 1446 (Tapes 31, 32)

Narrator: Ali Çiftçi, in 60s  
in 1970s

Location: Çıkırıkçı village,  
Sarıkaya kaza,  
Yozgat Province

Date: 1976

The Son of Hasan the Hunter<sup>1</sup>

There was once a successful hunter named Hasan who had only one child, a son. While this boy was still an infant, Hasan became fatally ill. Before he died, Hasan said to his wife, "Woman, hide my bow, arrows, sling, and knife so that my son will not see them when he grows up. When he is old enough take him to a hoca<sup>2</sup> and have him educated."

A few years after Hasan the Hunter died, his son was old enough to go to school. His mother sent him to the nearest hoca to be educated.

\_\_\_\_\_ passage, the hoca slapped

<sup>1</sup>The protagonist has no regular name. To avoid the awkwardness of calling him The Son of the Hunter or The Son of Hasan the Hunter throughout, we shall refer to him in most instances as Hasanoğlu, which means in Turkish The Son of Hasan.

<sup>2</sup>A hoca is a preacher and the religious leader of a community. In pre-Republican times the hoca was also the community teacher. Separation of church and state in the Republic required that teachers be people of secular rather than of religious training.

<sup>3</sup>Bismillah is the shortened, more convenient form of Bismillahirrahmanirrahim, which means "In the name of the most merciful God." It is a word used audibly or silently by many devout Moslems before starting any undertaking, great or small, and it then signifies "I begin this act by mentioning the name of God as a sign of respect." It is widely believed that saying this aids success and failing to say it may bring failure in any undertaking. It is the opening line of the Koran.

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him and said, "Go home and learn your father's occupation!"

Returning home, the boy told his mother what had happened. Then he asked, "Mother, what was my father's occupation?"

"He was a reader, Son. Go back to school and learn to read so that you may have the same occupation."

The boy returned to the school, but again the hoca slapped him and said, "Go home and learn your father's occupation."

When this had happened a third time, Hasanoğlu went home determined to discover what his father had really done for a living. He said to his mother, "Mother, I have vowed to kill you if you do not tell me the truth about my father's occupation. What was that occupation?"

Realizing that she now had no choice but to tell the truth, the woman said, "Son, your father was a hunter."

"Where are his weapons?"

"I hid them in the hayrick so that you would not see them," she answered. After the boy had found his father's bow, arrows, sling, and knife and had returned with them, his mother said "Your father made a will. He told me that you might go to this or that place but that you were never to go beyond that mountain over there."

"Why?"

"I don't know," said his mother. "All that I know is that

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that was his dying statement to me."

To himself the boy said, "There were things my father knew and things he did not know. I shall go myself behind that mountain and discover what is behind it." Going behind the mountain, he saw nothing very unusual there, but he did see a great many different kinds of birds there. Putting an arrow to his bow, he shot one of these birds, and when he went to where it lay, he was surprised to see what a beautiful bird it was. He thought, "I shall go and present this as a gift to the padishah. I may receive five or ten kuruş<sup>4</sup> in return for it."

The padishah was very pleased by the bird presented to him, and so he said to his grand vizier, "Give this boy a handful of gold from the treasury."

The grand vizier took Hasanoğlu to the treasury and gave him a handful of gold, but he also slapped him and spoke unpleasantly to him. He said, "So you have grown up enough to bring a bird here. Well, get out of here now! Don't you suppose that there are other brave men capable of doing such a

<sup>4</sup>While it was still a negotiable unit of currency, the kuruş was worth 1/100 of a Turkish lira. When the lira was a gold coin, the kuruş was quite a respected monetary unit. Devaluation of the lira, beginning in the 1960s, has rapidly shrunk its value almost to nothingness, and one result of this was the disappearance of the kuruş. Of what use would a kuruş be when it required several thousand liras to equal the value of a U.S. dollar?

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thing?" But after he had said that, the grand vizier began to feel quite uncomfortable about the possible consequences. "If the padishah should hear about this, or if this boy should make a complaint against my treatment of him, I might be executed," thought the vizier. "I am going to have to kill this boy in order to protect myself."

One day when he was talking with the padishah, the vizier said, "Your majesty, do you know what would make a unique attraction here in your land?"

"What would that be, my vizier?"

"It would be a palace made entirely out of bird bones," answered the vizier.

"But who could construct such a wonder?" asked the padishah

"Hasanoğlu, the young man who brought you the colorful bird, could do it.

"Well, then, have him called here to my presence," said the padishah

When Hasanoğlu arrived before the throne, the padishah said to him, "My son, I want you to build me a palace made entirely out of bird bones. You will either construct such a palace for me or have your head cut off."

"My padishah," said Hasanoğlu, "my strength is not yet great enough to complete such a task."

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"That is your problem and not mine," said the padishah.  
 "Begin your work as soon as possible.

The boy returned home in tears. Taking his bow and arrows on his shoulder, he went into the nearby mountains. There he was greeted by an old saint, "Selamünaleyküm."

"Aleykümselam,"<sup>5</sup> responded Hasanoğlu

"Son, where are you going?" asked the old man. Then after he had heard Hasanoğlu explain his difficulty, he said, "Son, someone is trying to kill you. But I shall help you,

I shall describe a way in which you can fulfill the task has been assigned to you. It will be best for you if you follow my directions exactly. Now go and get several batmans<sup>6</sup> salt. There is a fountain at such and such a place in these mountains. Dam up the water that flows from that fountain, into the pool that is formed throw five or ten batmans of salt. Then hide among the trees and wait. All the birds in the world come to drink water from that fountain, but when a

<sup>5</sup>Selamünaleyküm/Aleykümselam--traditional exchange of greetings between Moslems not well acquainted with each other. It means roughly May peace be unto you/And may peace be unto you, too. If Selamünaleyküm is not responded to, the speaker should be wary of the one so addressed.

<sup>6</sup>A measure of weight varying from 2.5 to 22 pounds at different times and at different places in the Ottoman Empire. There is some evidence of its use as late as 1931.

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bird drinks the brine you have made, it will die. After thousands of birds have been killed in this way, gather up their bodies and have them hauled into the city where you can make a palace out of their bones."

Hasanoğlu went to the marketplace and bought five or ten batmans of salt and took it into the mountains to the fountain described by the old saint.

water flowing from the fountain. had brought, he threw it all into the pool of water that had collected around the fountain. Then he hid nearby. Soon all of the birds in the world came there to drink, and as each one drank the brine in the pool, it fell dead. Taking these birds to an open field near the padishah's palace, Hasanoğlu used their bones to build another and very unique palace. Then he went to the padishah and said, "Your majesty, please come and see the palace made of bird bones which I have constructed for you."

In this way the bird-bone palace was built, and as a result the grand vizier failed to have Hasanoğlu killed. Still fearful that his secret might reach the ears of the padishah and that, as a result, he himself might be executed, the grand vizier devised a new plot against Hasanoğlu. Going to the padishah, he said, "Your majesty, the palace made of bird bones has been completed."

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"Yes, it has.

"Do you know with what you are supposed to sprinkle such a palace?"

"With what?"

"You are supposed to sprinkle it with deer milk."

"But who is there, my vizier, who can get enough deer milk for that purpose?"

"Hasanoğlu, the young hunter, can do it."

"Then call him to my presence at once," said the padishah. And when Hasanoğlu arrived, he said, "Son, you are to sprinkle the bird-bone palace with deer milk.

"My padishah," asked Hasanoğlu, "where am I to find enough deer for that purpose? And who is to milk that many deer?"

"That is not my problem," answered the padishah. "That is your problem, and you must either solve it or lose your head as a penalty."

Again he returned home in tears. There he slung his bow and arrows over his shoulder and went to the place in the mountains where he had earlier met the old saint. "Where are you going now, son?" the old man asked. And after Hasanoğlu had explained the new task given to him, the saint said, "Again, someone is trying to kill you, son, but again I shall help you to escape execution. Have several barrels taken to the top of

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this mountain. There recite the Fatiya prayer,<sup>7</sup> and a deer will come to your side. Reach into that deer's mouth and pull out one of its molars. That deer will call all the deer in these mountains. As they arrive, milk all of the female deer and put their milk into the barrels. Then have the barrels carried into the city so that they can sprinkle the bird-bone palace with the milk.

Hasanoğlu followed the instructions of the saint exactly. He milked all of the female deer and put their milk into barrels. Then he had the barrels carried to the padishah's palace. "Your majesty, here is the deer milk with which to have your bird-bone palace sprinkled."

Again prevented from having Hasanoğlu killed, the grand vizier said to the padishah, "You have had a bird-bone palace built and then sprinkled with deer milk. But the inside of the palace is still bare. Do you know what should be spread on the floor of that palace?"

"What should be spread on the floor, my vizier?"

"Such a palace should have its floor covered with the skins of a lion and a tiger."

"But who is there to bring me a lion skin and a tiger skin?"

"Hasanoğlu would be able to bring you the skins you need."

<sup>7</sup>The opening lines of the Koran are sometimes called the Fatiya or Fatiha.



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"Then have him called here," said the padishah, and when Hasanoğlu arrived, he said to the boy, "My son, I want you to bring me the skins of a lion and a tiger to cover the floor of the bird-bone palace."

"Your majesty, how can I even approach animals as fierce as lions and tigers? They are as dangerous as dragons."

"All of that is your problem. All I want are the lion and tiger skins. If you bring them I shall be pleased. If you do not bring them, I shall be so displeased that I shall send your head to the executioners."

Taking his bow and arrows, Hasanoğlu again walked to the mountain, crying as he went. When he explained the latest task assigned him, the old saint said, "Oh, Hasanoğlu! Oh, Hasanoğlu! This will be a very dangerous undertaking. Behind that mountain over there a lion and a tiger lie alongside each other. When they see you, they will stiffen. When you see them stiffen, you must shoot an arrow so accurately that it will pass through both of them. If you fail to do this, then may Allah help you!"

Descending the mountain he was on, Hasanoğlu walked to the nearby mountain that the old man had pointed out. Passing behind that second mountain, he came upon the lion and tiger lying alongside each other. Just as the saint had said, they

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stiffened and puffed themselves out when they saw him approaching. Fitting an arrow to his bow and saying, "Allah, help me!" the boy shot an arrow that passed through the necks of both animals. He skinned the two animals and took their hides to the palace. "Your majesty, here are the lion skin and the tiger skin that you wanted."

The efforts of the grand vizier to kill Hasanoğlu had failed again. After a short while, however, the vizier to the padishah with another plan. He said, "Your majesty your bird-bone palace has been built. It has been sprinkled with deer milk and carpeted with lion and tiger skins. What it needs now is a certain beautiful woman with whom you live."

"What woman?"

"The padishah of Georgia has a daughter so beautiful that she has no equal. If you have her brought here so that can live with you in the bird-bone palace, your life would be perfect."

"But how can we bring her here?"

"Hasanoğlu is capable of bringing her here."

"Call Hasanoğlu then." And when Hasanoğlu appeared in his presence, the padishah said, "Son, I want to have the daughter of the padishah of Georgia brought here to live in the bird-

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bone palace, and you are the one who must bring her here."

"Your majesty, if you and your whole army are unable to bring that girl here, how could I possibly do it?"

"I don't know. That is for you to discover. Either you will bring her to me or you will have your head cut off."

Really frightened this time, Hasanoğlu again returned to his home in tears. On the following day he slung his bow and arrow case over his shoulder and went to the mountain to find the friendly saint. "Where are you going now, son?" asked the old man. Then, after Hasanoğlu had explained his new task, the old man said, "Oh, son, they are still trying to kill you! May Allah help you! Between here and Georgia you must pass through certain lands where you will encounter other adventures.

"You will come first to a land of giants. Before you enter that land, buy a batman of pitch. Next you will enter a country of birds. Buy a batman of wheat to present to the padishah of birds. Then you will come to a country of ants, and you will also need a batman of wheat to present to the padishah of ants in order to pass through their country safely.

"When you first enter the land of giants, you will see a female giant sitting chewing pine gum. She will have her breasts thrown over her shoulders onto her back. Without

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letting her see you approach, sneak up behind her, throw the batman of pitch into her mouth, and suck upon one of her breasts. That will protect you against being eaten by either the giantess or any of her family."<sup>8</sup>

After traveling for some time, Hasanoğlu entered the land of giants. Almost immediately he came upon the female giant with her breasts thrown over her shoulders onto her back. He walked up quietly behind her, threw a batman of pitch into her mouth, and sucked on one of her breasts. "Walk around in front of me now. If you had not behaved exactly the way you did, I should have eaten you, leaving no scrap of your body larger than your ear. I have several sons who are now away hunting. If they should see you as an ordinary human being here, they would tear you to pieces and eat you. Let me hide you for now,

later I shall introduce you to them at the appropriate time."

put Hasanoğlu into a chest and locked it.

When her sons returned home from hunting, they said,

"Mother, we smell a human being here."

<sup>8</sup>This is the concept of milk siblings. It is not just a convention of the folktale but of Turkish real life as well. Nursing mothers sometimes nurse each other's infant briefly in order to establish this milk relationship. This is thought to create a bond not only between the sucklings but also between their families. It is not as strong a bond as a family or clan tie, but it is one more way of gaining a meaningful alliance, a special kind of strong friendship.

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"Yes, you do," she answered. "You had a stepbrother among human beings, a son of mine that you have never seen before. He has come here to visit us, but I have locked him in this chest for fear that you might do something to harm him."

"Take him out of the chest, Mother. If he is our stepbrother, we want to see him, and we shall not harm him." She removed him from the chest, and the sons respected the boy's well-being as their mother had done. They all ate and drank together, and then Hasanoğlu said farewell and renewed his travel toward Georgia.<sup>9</sup>

When he entered the land of birds, he went directly to the padishah and presented him with a batman of wheat. "You may now go wherever you wish safely within our land, but if you had not first given me the batman of wheat, I would have torn you apart and eaten you, leaving no scrap of your flesh bigger than an ear. Now take these two feathers of mine. If should ever fall into serious difficulty, rub these two feathers together and I shall come to your rescue."

<sup>9</sup>The episode here with the giants is almost functionless in the plot. In tales of this type each dangerous encounter survived provides the protagonist with some token or promise of future help. Both the bird and the ant episodes provide magic tokens for bringing assistance in future difficulties, and both offers of assistance are called upon and used. Apparently, the narrator forgot to include this one small part of the tale.

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After Hasanoğlu had passed through the land of birds, he entered the land of ants. He went directly to the padishah of ants and placed a batman of wheat before him. "You may come and go in this land as you wish," said the padishah of ants, "but if you had not behaved as you did, you would have been in great trouble. Now take these two hairs of mine. If you should ever find yourself in trouble, rub these hairs together, and I shall come to your assistance.

The boy said good-bye and departed from the land of the ants. As he traveled along, he came upon a man sitting beneath a stream of ice-cold water that flowed from a millpond. As icy water poured upon his head, this man laughed and called out loudly in great pleasure. Hasanoğlu shouted, "Selamünaleyküm!"

"Aleykümselam!" returned the man.

"What a remarkable thing this is! Ice-cold water is pouring down upon your head, and yet you are expressing great joy!"

"Go away! It is nothing compared to the ability of Hasanoğlu, who built a whole palace out of bird bones

"Friend, I am that Hasanoğlu

"Then I shall be your friend, too," said this man, and he joined Hasanoğlu as he continued down the road

After they had been traveling along for some time, they

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came upon a man who was seated before forty cauldrons of soup.

man sitting there was saying, "I am going to eat this soup! I am going to eat this soup!" He drank down all forty cauldrons of soup, but as soon as he had finished it, he complained,

I am so hungry! I am so hungry!"

"What a strong man you are! You drank forty cauldrons of soup, but you say that you are still hungry!" said the boy.

"It is nothing that can be compared with the might of Hasanoğlu, who collected enough deer milk to sprinkle a whole palace with it.

"I am that Hasanoğlu."

"Then I shall be your friend," said the mighty eater, and he joined Hasanoğlu and the man who survived in icy water. As the three of them walked along, they came upon a man whose strides were so long that 500 sheep could graze on the land he passed with each step he took.

"What a mighty man you must be when your strides are so long that 500 sheep can graze between one step and the next

"But do you think that I am even half as strong as Hasanoğlu who carpeted a palace floor with the skins of a lion and a tiger that he had killed?"

"I am Hasanoğlu."

"Then I am your friend!" said the great strider, and he

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joined Hasanoğlu and his two other companions. After the four had gone a short distance, they saw a man who was cutting iron with a wooden axe. He kept swinging his axe and cutting more and more iron as they watched him.

"What an unusually strong man you are! Who else has ever cut iron with a wooden axe?"

"Do you think that I may be as strong as Hasanoğlu built a whole palace out of bird bones?"

"I am that person," said Hasanoğlu.

"Then I shall be your friend," said the man with the wooden axe. Hasanoğlu and his four new friends traveled ahead until they saw a man lying alongside the road with his ear to the ground.

"What are you doing there?" the five travelers asked the man on the ground.

"I am listening to all of the gossip being discussed by those beneath the surface of the earth."

"I did not know that it was possible for anyone to do that! What a talented man you must be!" said Hasanoğlu.

"But I am not nearly as talented as a young man named Hasanoğlu, who collected enough deer milk so that a whole palace could be sprinkled with it."

"I am that Hasanoğlu."



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"Then I shall be glad to be a friend of yours," said the man with keen hearing. Now there were six of them traveling along on the way to Georgia. After a while they came upon a man who kept piling wood on a stack and then, with great effort, lifting the stack. The stack of wood was almost as tall as a building, but every time he set the stack back down on the ground, he added another piece of wood. After the travelers has watched him do this from some distance for a while, they moved closer to this mighty lifter and said, "Selamünaleyküm."

"Aleykümselam."

"What a brave man you must be! You can just barely that huge stack of wood, but you keep adding to the pile piece after piece

"Oh, my bravery is nothing compared to that of Hasanoğlu, who killed a fierce lion and a fierce tiger so that he could use their skins to carpet the floor of a palace."

"I am that Hasanoğlu."

"Then I shall be your friend," said the mighty lifter. All seven of them then traveled on to Georgia. There they went to see the padishah of Georgia and became his guests at the palace. After eating and drinking and carrying on some conversation, Hasanoğlu stood up and said, "We have come with the will of Allah and the approval of the Prophet to ask for

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the hand of your daughter for such and such a padishah."<sup>10</sup>

The padishah of Georgia answered, "There are viziers and relatives with whom we shall have to discuss this matter. We shall talk it over tonight and give you our answer in the morning."

As the padishah and his men were discussing this proposal, they were being overheard by the keen listener, who was able to hear people underground gossiping. This is what he heard them saying: "Let us turn up the hamam<sup>11</sup> and then tell these strangers that they will have to bathe before we will give them our girl. Once they are inside the hamam, we shall lock the doors, turn up the heat even higher, and leave them there until the steam kills them. In that way we shall have gotten rid of them."

The keen listener announced to his six companions, "We are in trouble, friends."

"Why?"

<sup>10</sup>An appreciable percentage of Turkish marriages are not brought about by love but by parental arrangement. A matchmaker is sent to the family of the girl, and much of the dialogue between the two parties is carried on through formulaic expressions. The opening remark of the matchmaker is this: "I have come with the will of Allah and the approval of the Prophet to ask for the hand of your daughter in marriage to X, the son of Y." The claim of being backed by Allah's will is a condition devoutly to be wished, and it is apparently uttered in the optative subjunctive mode.

<sup>11</sup>A Turkish bath.

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"They are going to put us in the hamam and kill us with heat."

Then the man who survived the ice-cold water flowing from the millpond said, "Lie down and sleep, friends. There is a very easy way to solve that problem.

In the morning one of the padishah's men came and explained the condition set for giving them the princess. Then he said, "Into the hamam! Into the hamam!"

But the man who had enjoyed sitting beneath the icy millpond waterfall spoke up and said, "Open the door and let me take a look at your hamam." When they opened the door, he blew his breath inside the hamam and the inside of the whole building was covered with frost. He then said, "Are you asking us to bathe in this hamam? There is ice inside it!"

Unable to get rid of their unwanted guests in the way they had planned, the Georgians said, "We shall have to talk further among ourselves before we can give you an answer.

While they were talking apart, the keen listener (who could hear the gossiping of people underground) overheard their discussion. This is what he heard them saying: "Let us have forty cauldrons of soup cooked. Then we shall tell these strangers that if they can eat all that soup, we shall give them the princess, but if they cannot eat it all, we

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shall kill them."

After hearing that, the keen listener announced, "We are in trouble, friends."

"Why?"

They are going to cook forty cauldrons of soup. If we can eat all of that soup, they will give us the padishah's daughter, but if we fail to eat all of it, they will execute us."

Upon hearing that, the mighty eater (who had already eaten forty cauldrons of soup) said, "Don't worry about that. It is a very easy matter to handle."

On the following morning one of the padishah's men explained to the seven companions the Georgians' decision about eating the soup. Then he called out, "Come to the soup! Come to the soup!"

When they went to the place where the forty cauldrons of soup stood ready, the mighty eater stepped forward and began drinking the soup. He drank cauldron after cauldron until he had finished all forty of them. Then he said, "You cannot satisfy even my hunger, and my six companions are even hungrier than I am!"

When they realized that their plan for getting rid of the strangers had failed, the Georgians said, "We shall have to

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talk further about your request for our princess. When we have reached a decision, we shall inform you about it."

As the Georgian padishah, his viziers, and his advisers were discussing this matter, their conversation was again overheard by the keen listener. This is what he heard them say: "There is a fountain that is an hour's ride from here. Let us have the princess and Hasanoğlu race there and back--riding to the fountain on horseback but walking back. If boy returns first, we shall give them the girl, but if she returns first, we shall kill all seven of the foreigners girl will win the race, for when they reach the fountain, the boy will look at her and, stunned by her unique beauty, he will fall to the ground unconscious. By the time he revives, the princess will be most of the way home."

After listening carefully to this plot, the keen listener announced to his six companions, "We are in trouble, friends."

"Why?"

The keen listener explained the new Georgian plot. Then the great strider (between whose steps 500 sheep could graze) said, "Do not give any concern to that problem. I can resolve it very easily

On the following morning one of the padishah's men explained the terms of the race. Then the princess and Hasanoğlu mounted

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horses and rode to the fountain. When they got there, the girl said, "Why don't you even look at me? Look me in the face at least once before we return." As soon as Hasanoğlu looked at overpowering beauty, he fainted and fell off his horse.

girl then started walking back. But the great strider was observing what was happening. Picking up Hasanoğlu, he carried him in long strides back almost to the starting place then let him walk the last half kilometer. He arrived at the starting place well ahead of the princess.

The Georgians were very surprised that this plot had failed. They again withdrew to discuss the response they would give to the foreigners' request for their princess. As they talked, were again being overheard by the keen listener. This is what he heard them say: "Let us give them a really impossible task this time. Let us say that if any of them can cut iron with a wooden axe, we shall give them the princess, but if none of them can do that, then we shall have them all executed. Of course, no one can possibly cut iron with a wooden axe, and so this time we shall be able to kill all of them."

Again the keen listener announced to his six companions, "Friends, we are in trouble."

"Why?"

The keen listener repeated the conversation he had just

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overheard. But the man among them who had actually been cutting iron with a wooden axe when Hasanoğlu first met him said, "Don't worry about that. It is not so difficult to iron with a wooden axe."

The following morning the Georgians announced their new condition for giving away their princess. They then placed some iron rods on the ground and placed a wooden axe upon them.

mighty axe wielder grabbed the wooden axe and quickly chopped all of the iron rods into short pieces.

Amazed by what the mighty axe wielder had done, the Georgians said, "We shall discuss further the terms under which we may give you the princess. We shall inform you of our decision in the morning."

Among themselves the Georgians said, "We must think of a more difficult task to be accomplished. Let us ask them to stuff forty mattresses with bird feathers in one day. If they can do that, we shall give them the princess; if they cannot do it, we shall execute them. It will be impossible for them to gather so many bird feathers in such a short time, and so we shall have good reason to execute them."

The keen listener had again been overhearing their discussion, and when it had ended, he announced to his six companions, "Friends, we are in trouble."

"Why?"

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When the keen listener explained the latest Georgian plot against them, Hasanoğlu spoke up and said, "Friends, lie down and get a good sleep. I can easily arrange to get enough feathers to stuff forty mattresses."

On the following morning one of the padishah's men went to the seven companions with forty mattress covers on his back. After he had explained the new condition for giving away Georgian princess, Hasanoğlu rubbed together the two feathers that had been given to him by the padishah of birds. Within a few minutes thousands and thousands of birds began to arrive from every direction. They all shed as many feathers as could spare, and long before the day was over the seven companions had enough feathers to stuff sixty mattresses them.

This time when the Georgians withdrew, they did not at first know what plan they could use to defeat the foreigners. Then one of them said, "Here is a plan. Let us take our whole supply of several different kinds of grain and mix them all together. Then we shall give the foreigners one night in which to separate all of the kernels of grain so that each heap will then contain only one kind of grain. If they can do this by morning, we shall give them the princess; if they cannot do it, we shall execute them."



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Once again the keen listener announced, "Friends, we are in trouble."

"Why?"

"The Georgians are going to mix together their total supply of several different grains. They will then give us all night to separate all of that grain so that each heap will contain only one kind of grain. If we can do that, they say that they will give us the princess; if we cannot do that they say that they will execute us."

Hasanoğlu spoke up again and said, "Do not worry about this task. It will not be as difficult as it may seem to be."

That evening the seven companions were taken to the huge granary behind the palace where a great amount of mixed grains had been heaped up on the floor. They were then told, "There are six different kinds of grain in this pile. By tomorrow morning you are to separate all this grain into six smaller piles, and in each of those smaller piles there is to be just one kind of grain. If you can do that, we shall give you the princess for your padishah; if you cannot do it, we shall execute you." As soon as the Georgians had left the granary Hasanoğlu took from his pocket the two ant hairs and rubbed them together. When ants began to arrive, Hasanoğlu explained to them what was to be done with the mixed grains. Within

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two hours there were hundreds of thousands of ants there, they continued to arrive until the whole granary was covered with them. When the Georgians returned to the granary in the morning, they discovered that every single kernel of grain had been placed in one or another of the six piles of different kinds of grain

The Georgians were greatly discouraged at the failure of all their plots against the strangers. When they drew apart to discuss for the last time the conditions under which they would give away the princess, none of them could think of another plot. Finally one of them said, "There is no way in which we can outwit these clever strangers. The only way in which we can get rid of these foreigners is to fight them. In that way either we will kill them or they will kill us."

The keen listener had heard every word that the Georgians had said, and he now announced to his six companions, "Friends, we are in trouble."

"Why are we in trouble?"

After the keen listener had explained the Georgian decision to fight the seven companions, the mighty lifter said, "That will not really be a problem, for I shall persuade them against fighting. Bring me a spade." When he was given a spade, he took it to one corner of the padishah's palace and dug a

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hole beneath one corner of the foundation of that building. When the earth was completely cleared away from that corner of the foundation, the mighty lifter grasped the corner and began to lift that part of the palace

When the padishah and the viziers felt the building moving, they said, "Oh, put the building back in place and we shall give the girl to you."

After the mighty lifter had set the corner of the building back in place, the padishah of Georgia said to the seven companions, "May Allah curse you." He then presented the princess to them.

On their return trip one companion after another separated from the group as they came to their own home areas. Hasanoğlu bade each of these helpers farewell. Then he stopped briefly in each of the three kingdoms he had first entered, bidding farewell to the padishah of birds, the padishah of ants, the family of giants.

As they got nearer and nearer to Turkey, the princess finally asked Hasanoğlu, "Young man, are you taking me there for yourself or for some other person?"

"I am taking you to the padishah of my land."

The girl then said, "You have endured much suffering and survived many dangers because of the tasks demanded of you

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by your padishah. Now I shall give him a dangerous task. I am going to write a letter to him. If he can read it, I shall agree to be his wife, but if he fails to read it, we shall knock him on the head and kill him. Then you will become the padishah, and I shall become your wife."

After she had written in very unusual handwriting, they delivered it to the padishah. He turned it over and over and around and around, but he was unable to understand any of it. "I cannot read it," he said. Then the grand vizier took letter and studied it for several minutes, but he too was unable to read it

Hasanoğlu then said the grand vizier, "You scoundrel! You are the one who has caused me so much difficulty!" He first struck the vizier on the head and next the padishah, killing both of them.

Then Hasanoğlu became the new padishah, and the princess of Georgia became his wife. They ate and drank and lived their lives, and then they passed into the ground. No one remains in this world forever. When an ox dies, its hide remains. When a brave man dies, his fame lives on.